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English-Speaking Union

Report of speeches at the farewell dinner to the...

[Croydon]

[1921?]

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THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION

(With which is incorporated The Atlantic Union, founded in 1897)

"To draw together in the English-speaking *the bond of comradeship peoples of the world."*

Report of Speeches at the

FAREWELL DINNER

to THE RT. HON.

The EARL OF READING, G.C.B.

(Viceroy-Designate of India)

held at

The Hyde Park Hotel, London,

on

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY,

SATURDAY, 12th FEBRUARY, 1921

The Rt. Hon. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, M.P.
(Secretary of State for the Colonies)
IN THE CHAIR.

TRAFALGAR BUILDINGS, 1 CHARING CROSS, W.C.2.

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION

FAREWELL DINNER

TO

THE RT. HON.

THE EARL OF READING, G.C.B.

(Viceroy-Designate of India)

Saturday, February 12th, 1921

The Rt. Hon. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, M.P.

(Secretary of State for the Colonies)

Presiding over a company numbering 574

THE CHAIRMAN, having proposed the toast of "The King" and of "The President of the United States,"

MR. EVELYN WRENCH (Hon. Secretary) read the following messages:

THE PRIME MINISTER.—I am delighted to know that the English-Speaking Union is giving a banquet to my old friend Lord Reading, before his impending departure to take up his appointment as Viceroy of India. Lord Reading has shown his patriotism in undertaking one of the most responsible tasks which any British citizen could undertake for the Empire. But I am confident that he will be as successful in this office as he has been in the other high offices he has filled, and that India will learn to appreciate his great gifts as we in the West have done.

THE HON. WILLIAM H. TAFT.—American Branch English-Speaking Union rejoices that Earl Reading, whose presence as

American Ambassador did much to keep the great English-speaking nations in friendly and effective co-operation in a common crisis, finds his great ability, fairness, and patriotism again recognised in a call by his country to meet another difficult situation. Our sincerest wishes for his success go with him.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR.—I deeply regret that a temporary indisposition prevents me from joining my associates of the English-Speaking Union in their dinner to our efficient Chairman, Lord Reading. The many friends whom he and Lady Reading left behind them in America would wish me, I am sure, to voice their hope for the highest measure of success to the future Viceroy and Vicereine in their "brave and new" adventure. Great as have been Lord Reading's services to Great Britain and the British Empire, those which he has rendered to the cause of Anglo-American friendship are not inferior. He goes to the people of India having already put two nations in his debt; and no man has better right than he to say—"The future I may face, now I have proved the Past." America joins Great Britain in wishing for India under his guidance an era of peace, prosperity and contentment.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I rise to propose the health of Lord Reading, Viceroy-designate of India and Chairman of the English-Speaking Union. I was to have been assisted in this task and supported by the American Ambassador, Mr. Davis, but I deeply regret that from causes of health he has been unable to come here to-night. He is, however, represented by Mrs. Davis, whose presence we greatly welcome. I regret very much that the Ambassador has not been able to come because I wanted to express to him in his presence what everyone who belongs to the English-Speaking Union, and a great many millions outside that body, feel about the work which he has done in this country during his memorable

tenure of office. The United States have always been very good to us in sending us a succession of distinguished men to this country, but I really do not know of any embassy or envoy which has more effectively discharged the task of directing the relation of these two great countries than the one for which Mr. Davis has been responsible. As time is so short, I think we will entrust Mrs. Davis with conveying to him our strong and earnest feeling of gratitude to him for all that he has done for the common cause we have at heart and our good wishes to him on his return to his native land. (Applause.)

The last time that I addressed the English-Speaking Union is deeply imprinted on my mind. It was on the 4th July, 1918. At the very moment when I was speaking in the Central Hall, the British, Australian, and American troops were advancing together victoriously upon the common enemy, the redoubtable German. It was the attack in the neighbourhood of Villers Bretonneux, which heralded the great victories which began a month later. This union of English-speaking soldiers from all the corners of the world was in itself an event without precedent in history. It was an event of profound significance for the future. It was an event which, I think I may say, symbolizes in the terrible sphere of war all that the English-Speaking Union has been created to maintain. (Applause.)

The war is over; the war period with its glories, brutal or sublime, is passing away, and passing away for a long generation from the world. From this intense convulsion through which we have passed the English-speaking peoples have emerged, exhausted, impoverished, but at any rate safe and free. (Cheers.) Let us conserve through long years of peace what we gained together at so great a cost and at so great a peril in the cruel time of war. The English-Speaking Union has for its purpose to draw together in the bond of comradeship the English-speaking peoples of the world. Surely there never was an object at once so practical and so exalted.

We must not expect that in our short individual lives we shall witness the full achievement of all we hoped for: but at any rate we are fortunate in being able to see quite clearly some of the practical steps which lie immediately before us.

So far as the Dominions of the British Empire are concerned, the new principle which seems to be developing is that of common consultation among the members of the British Empire in regard to the difficulties of any one of them. Although technically, no doubt, as Lord Rosebery said, and said so well, many years ago, " the title deeds of the British Empire are in these islands "; yet after what we have been through together in the war, it would not be right for any great Imperial decision—especially one which concerned the status of any nation within the British Empire—to be taken in a final way, as if it were only a British affair, without the consultation of the Cabinet and the whole body of the British Empire. (Applause.) It is only the application of what the French call " a council of the family," at which, instead of individuals, powerful States will appear, like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, and will share with the Mother Country the responsibility for dealing with great and dominant questions, the decision of which affects the common fortunes of the whole body. (Cheers.)

This principle may be found to have its usefulness in relation to countries and to nations as far apart and as widely different as Ireland and Egypt. We all know how great the difficulties are. We all know that we need our united efforts to solve the problem. I remember fifteen years ago, when I first had the honour to serve the Crown in an official position, the difficulties in South Africa seemed just as formidable and just as perplexing as any that confront us in the British Empire to-day. But, by action which was bold, and at the same time understanding—(hear, hear)—by action for which the memory of the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman—(cheers)—will always be esteemed, we entered upon a course in regard to

South Africa which we have never since had reason to regret. (Applause.) Therefore, I am hopeful, and even confident, that in a few years all our present difficulties will be greatly diminished, and that nations, whose affairs are now a reproach and a stumbling block to the supreme cause that the English-Speaking Union has at heart, may be found—as South Africa is found—to be managing their own affairs and unfolding their own destiny peacefully and prosperously within the elastic circle of the British Empire. (Applause.)

So far as our relations with the United States of America are concerned, the steps which it is open for the English-Speaking Union to take seem quite plain. We must exert every influence at our disposal to make sure that the Governments and peoples on either side of the ocean understand each other's point of view and endeavour to harmonize their own policies, so far as they can, to the needs and the wishes of their true friends. We also here at this gathering of the English-Speaking Union are surely entitled—indeed I think we are bound—to dwell upon those episodes in the life of the English-speaking peoples which claim the united sympathy and enthusiasm of them all. Many things are written from time to time, but let us stedfastly and persistently strike the dominant notes in the relations of Britain and the British Empire and the United States. From the days when the American Admiral uttered the undying phrase, " Blood is thicker than water," to the days of the hurricane at Samoa, when the crew of the doomed American flagship, " Trenton," going, as they thought, to their deaths, cheered the British " Calliope," putting out to sea against the storm, down to the situation which arose in Manila Harbour in May, 1898, incidents of profound significance have occurred which should be preserved and which should be published and which should be repeated by all the members of the English-Speaking Union, and by all those to whom these members can obtain access, for the instruction of youth and for the encouragement of age. (Applause.)

There are later incidents, which I will venture, if you will permit me, to remind you of to-night. We are coming down to the year 1910. At the end of that year an American squadron came into British waters, and its Commander, Admiral Sims, speaking at the Guildhall on the occasion of a public entertainment, uttered these words: "I am sure that if the time should ever come when the British Empire is seriously menaced by an external enemy, its people may count on every man, every dollar, every ship, and every drop of blood of their kindred across the ocean." (Applause.) It was an indiscretion. (Laughter.) It was a shocking indiscretion—(renewed laughter)—but it was an indiscretion which had been vindicated by history. (Applause.) There are lots of people (if Mr. Davis had been here to-night I would have asked him, when he returns to the United States to mention it) in the British Islands, and in the British Empire, and I will add in the British Navy, who will never forget that prophecy—that marvellous prophecy and its punctual and wonderful fulfilment.

Far beneath the common froth and scum of daily life and business move the mysterious tides of national and of human destiny. Those who believe in the moral governance of the universe, those who feel that somehow a great story is moving forward here upon earth to its culmination, and that we are each of us charged with an awful responsibility in regard to that infinite evolution of events, those people will be on the look-out, I think, for indications of the movement of these deep, inexorable tides, and will use the knowledge they acquire by their careful study to enable them to discern the true forces which regulate the antagonisms and the associations of the human race, and which enable them to judge truly the transient and superficial affairs of ordinary life in their proper place and in their proper proportion. From such a study we shall fortify our faith in the future; we shall fortify our faith that in the great movements of their history the English-speaking

peoples will be found united, that they will be a barrier—an insurmountable barrier—against tyranny in every form, whether it is organised on the old Prussian model or according to the new Russian dispensation, and that the English-speaking peoples will tend more and more to walk together in faithfulness to all mankind along the paths of justice and of peace. (Applause.)

Now, I turn from the English-Speaking Union and come to its Chairman, our guest, Lord Reading. I have worked with him as a colleague and a friend for many years. We have had good days—and days less good. We have had anxious times, and then brighter times. Always I have admired his distinguished and, in many respects, incomparable gifts. Always I have known him for a true man, and a wise and faithful friend. (Cheers.) Advocate, judge, ambassador, viceroy—all these great functions have been pressed upon him and there is not one of them that he has discharged up to the present to which he has been found in any degree or respect unequal. It is a serious blow to the judiciary of Great Britain to lose their Lord Chief Justice, that great office in the hierarchy of our legal system that is always filled by exceptional individuals, one in a generation. An interruption of a tenure of this great trust is a matter of far more serious moment than could be measured by any question of individual transferment. But the situation in India, the needs, the claims, the rights of India, are urgent and clamant. We cannot refuse the very ablest man that we can find for that great service. This is no time for a refusal or a ceremonial appointment. We must have someone dealing with Indian affairs who is capable of piercing beneath the surface, who is capable of presenting his discoveries in the form of action, who is capable of gathering together the problems of this vast area of the human race, passing them through the mirror of his mind, and presenting a policy for effective action to meet the needs which otherwise will remain unsatisfied. We have high hopes that

Lord Reading may guide the people of India in the critical transitional period through which all the East is now passing. We hope that he may be able to reconcile modern needs with old, and not less vital, customs and traditions, and that he may combine new freedoms with respect for lawful power. At any rate, we are certain and we are sure that the effort he will make in these causes will be a memorable one in the mission of Britain to the peoples of India, and we send him on his path with heart-felt confidence and goodwill.

Past-master of the law, old servant of the Crown, friend of the United States, guardian now and champion of the land and people of Hindustan, we wish you God-speed. (Cheers.)

LORD READING, who was received with loud and prolonged applause, said: It was a charming and gracious idea on the part of the English-Speaking Union to invite me here to-night to meet you before I depart for India. The English-Speaking Union, I need not say to its members, is dear to my heart, and that you should have assembled together in these numbers to-night with the desire to do me honour, is a tribute which I deeply appreciate.

I have only one regret, and that is that His Excellency the American Ambassador is not well enough to be present this evening. I heard him on the telephone only a little before I came—though when I say I heard him, I am not quite sure that that is an accurate expression, but I did manage to distinguish what he wished to say—and the regret was tempered by the announcement, which he made to me, that Mrs. Davis, the lady whose graceful, charming courtesy is so well known to us at the American Embassy and elsewhere, was to be present. (Applause.) This is not quite the moment at which to speak of the American Ambassador's departure, although it is drawing very near. But I cannot, as Chairman of the English-Speaking Union—which I still am for the moment—refrain from saying that he will depart from here

with not only the sincere esteem and admiration of the people of this country, but it is no conventional phrase to use when I add that he will carry with him, and Mrs. Davis with her, the memory, which I trust will long last, of the abiding affection of the British people.

Mr. Churchill has expressed to you in the felicitous language of which he is so great a master the views that we hold as members of this Union, and also the views that are held by the British public, of America and Americans. He is an artist; but he has even greater versatility than the artist has usually presented to us, for not only can he manage to convey to us, with the assistance of oil or water-colours as his medium of expression, the foreground, the figures, the lights, the shades, the tones, the half-tones, the perspective—(laughter)—which he desires to place before us; but he has, if I may say it in his presence, a singular gift of word-painting, by which he just manages to present the picture to you without the artificial medium to which he has to have recourse on canvas, so as to express to you not only what he thinks, but what we all think, and ought to think. If it is true to say that the artist reproduces through the trained mind with the gifted eye, surely it is right to say of Mr. Churchill that he conveys his impression and draws the picture through the gifted mind by the trained and skilled tongue.

He has said to you, briefly but so well, some of the reasons why we should be drawn so closely to America and America to us. My views on this subject are too well known to need repetition, neither would I even incur your displeasure by attempting to reproduce them. But were I so minded, I could tell tales of America and of America's good will to Britain during my experience in America on the four visits that I paid to it during the war, which would take a very long time in the telling, but each incident of which would impress upon you most deeply the value and the generosity of American friendship to Britain. (Applause.)

There is just one incident to which I will briefly refer which has not been told before, and I only refer to it to-night because it is brought so prominently to my mind by a letter I have received from India. It seems a far cry from America to India for a British Ambassador, but during the war, when, as you know, every attempt was made to sow dissension in the Empire, when by insidious propaganda every attempt was made to create distrust of the British and of their Empire, there arose a situation in India which is not known to the general public, which may be found now in official documents, which are public and are little read, but which relate or give the material for a story which illustrated American goodwill and friendship as well as anything I know during the war—except perhaps the greatest event of all, when President Wilson agreed that the American troops should be brigaded with the French and British if it were needed. (Cheers.) It was a moment when, owing to the war and to this propaganda, there was a great scarcity of silver in India as well as elsewhere, and in India it was of more consequence than in most places. I pass over all the detail of the story, merely to tell you that there was a moment at which we were hard pressed, very hard pressed, to find the metallic reserve, and particularly the silver, which was necessary in India, when it was essential that the paper note should be convertible immediately into the silver rupee. Owing to this great scarcity the difficulty was to find the silver. There was no means but one, and that seemed impossible. In the vaults of the American Treasury there were vast stores of silver, preserved there as the financial backing against the notes which were issued by their Act of Congress, silver which could not be disturbed. It mattered not how much it was wanted. It could not be taken out of the vaults of the United States Treasury save by an Act of Congress. The United States Administration and the members of Congress, to whatever party they belonged, joined in an endeavour to meet the situation by passing an Act of Congress

without discussion, because discussion would be serious. Without any debate, or practically without any debate, this measure was passed in almost record shortness of time. It became law within very few days of its seeing the light, and vast millions of ounces of silver from the vaults were released by this Act of Congress and were sent across—by an arrangement between America and ourselves—to India, a country with which America had no concern, simply because it was necessary at that moment to help the British Empire. (Applause.) Nothing was made known of this, not even in a newspaper. (Laughter.) But, remember, all the newspapers were conscious of it. They knew as well as possible what was happening. They did not mention it because they knew that, if they did, they would detract largely from the generous service that America was rendering. They passed it over in silence, and nothing has ever been heard of it or said of it since. I do not myself know now after the war, long after it, that America has ever claimed in any way recognition of that service ; nothing has been said of it, and so far as I am aware I believe I am making the first utterance at a gathering of this kind upon the subject. I was even under the impression that it was still a subject not to be discussed. I took occasion in the new duties that fall upon me to enquire at that great temple to me now, the India Office—(laughter)—whether I could refer to this because the letter brought it again so prominently to me. The answer I received was: "Why, certainly you can. Anybody could ascertain it if he chose to read the official documents. You are certainly entitled to speak of it, and we shall be glad if you will."

I only instance that for the purpose of bringing home to the minds of the British people, not only what America can do if she once sets her mind to do a thing, but I want so strongly to impress upon them the generosity with which America responded to the demands that were made upon her during the war. (Applause.) There are many here present—I see their

faces as I look round—who were associated with me in that work in America. They know the truth of what I am saying. They know that we worked in America, not as a British Cabinet, not as the representatives of a British Cabinet, not as the representative of the King in the United States with a foreign Government, but with the President of the Administration, aye, and the members of both political parties, just as if we were sitting together at one table, trying to concentrate all our efforts and energies upon doing the best for the cause we both had at heart. (Applause.)

Now, be it remembered, that was during war; we were animated by a common purpose. When, after the war, individuals naturally quickly reverted to their ordinary occupations, men's minds turned to their own private affairs. Nations began to consider how they stood, and, no longer bound together by the one common purpose upon which we were all set, each nation naturally began to consider matters from its own standpoint. When that happens, of course, it necessarily follows that that great spirit of exalted idealism, to which the people of America, of this country and of our Allies, attained during the war, must come to an end: not entirely to an end, but it cannot be kept quite at the height at which it existed during a common peril. Those of you who watched events during the war will realize that men and women rose to greater heights than they had ever deemed themselves capable of attaining until the war came. They understood for the first time what true patriotism meant. It came to them as a fresh breeze, stimulating and encouraging them to efforts of which they had never dreamed. Alas, that those efforts cannot always be continued, and now that we are at peace we no longer have that exalted state, but we have to look at practical consideration; save, I would say, and I am sure you will all agree with me, that once the sacred light of patriotism has been kindled, it can never entirely be extinguished. In peace as in war—some of us perhaps are not

quite conscious of it—deep down in our hearts is the feeling that everyone to the utmost of his ability wants to do all he can to serve his country. (Cheers.) That is as true of America as it is of us.

When men, during the time of this great reorganisation after the world chaos, are striving to set their house in order and to see the path clearly marked out before them, it is easy for misunderstandings to arise. As you, Mr. Churchill, so wisely said, what is essential is that we should understand each other. Out of misunderstandings come suspicion—suspicion is never more rife than when there is little understanding—and out of suspicion quickly grows distrust. Suspicion may be sown on fertile soil, if it falls by means of sinister tales and whisperings amongst people who do not understand and know each other. After all, nations are only aggregations of human beings. The pulse of a nation is the pulse of an individual. The heart grows warm in friendship between nations as it does between individuals, and in friendship there is no room for these seeds of suspicion to generate. In friendship, with a solid rock of goodwill as the soil, the seed of suspicion—which some may be desirous of planting—must indeed prove to have been sown on the barren soil. (Applause.) I do not believe that it is possible—however clever those may be who are animated by feelings against us as a nation, for whatever reason we need not consider—I do not believe that they can sow those seeds here or in America so as to plant that suspicion which creates distrust. We can go one step further. Just as you, Mr. Churchill, said, we must always take care to remove the misunderstanding; we must remember that where there is this basis of goodwill, with a frank exposition of views on both sides, there will assuredly be found means of fair and reasonable adjustment between both nations on either side of the water. A great Frenchman said that no bargain is really a good bargain unless it pleases both sides. (Laughter.) This is very true in international

affairs. It is very true indeed of relations between two great and powerful countries like America and Britain.

I feel now, when I am about to leave this country in a short space of time, that I am leaving work which I have loved in very capable hands, that this Union and other kindred societies which exist both here and in America for the purpose of fostering good relations and promoting comradeship between our peoples, will continue to flourish. I look forward to the time when I am watching you with the deepest interest from India, when I am receiving the news of all that is happening over here and in America, and reading that your numbers are ever increasing, and that the relations between the two countries are ever growing stronger and better.

It cannot be for us to express any view of what America should do, or how she should do it. Neither is it, of course, for America to tell us what we should do, or how we should do it. Both nations thoroughly understand that. In our own affairs we have to govern ourselves according to the will of the majority of our own people. But still, America—perhaps against her will, certainly against her teaching since the days of George Washington—has found herself one of the greatest of the world Powers ever known. From the war she has learned, as I thoroughly believe, the lessons that we have all learned of the international character of trade, of shipping, of industry, of finance, and of economics, and she realizes that a country cannot exist solely within its own boundaries, that it must have relations elsewhere. Of course, I do not mean that America had not realized that there were necessities of this kind long before the war. What I do mean is that I believe America has learned, as we have, better than was known or understood before, that if you sever the relations that exist between different countries, if you reorganize a world, if you set up new territories, if there are revolutions, as there are in Russia, that all of us must feel the effects, and

that in the end they must react upon the prosperity, and consequently upon the wealth and employment, in the country. It is for America, of course, to say what part she will take. I will only utter one thought, speaking for myself and no one responsible but myself, but with some knowledge of America and Americans—I am convinced in my innermost heart that this country would never have to make a struggle for liberty or for justice without having America with her, influencing the counsels in favour of this very justice and liberty, and determined, if it became necessary, to take her part again as she did before.

And now, Mr. Chairman, I must remember that I am about to cease to be Chairman of the English-Speaking Union, and that I go forth to another world, not to the West but to the East. You have said some very charming and memorable things, Mr. Churchill, to-night. I do not myself think that I deserve more than a small part of them, if that. But you and those assembled here are acting as a great stimulus and encouragement to me in the work that I have undertaken—undertaken, let me say, gladly because it was represented to me that I could be of service to my country in that way. (Applause.) Mine is the fortunate situation of the man who is privileged to have the opportunity afforded him of showing that he is willing to do the service, when there are so many millions who would do the same if they had the opportunity but to whom it does not come. In that I am indeed a lucky man. I shall go determined, of course, to do my utmost, and conscious of the great task that is before me, with over three hundred millions of people in this great India of different castes, different religions, different customs, it may be even different habits of thought. I may be bold, but I have pondered this subject now many days, and what I think is this : that when one goes to India, one will find human nature in India as we find it here at home in Britain. I believe that the heart beats in India in sympathy and in warm response to

generous treatment as with our own people or the American people. I am confident that in India, as here, justice must reign supreme, and convinced of that, I do not doubt—I hope I am not unduly bold—but that India, if she credits me with those ideas, if she believes that I am actuated by those notions and policy, will give to me that same generous reception which I am so eager to give to her. (Long and continued applause.)

Sir George Perley (High Commissioner for Canada).—I am very proud to be here to-night on this historic occasion, and especially so that the English-Speaking Union have asked me to propose the health of the Chairman this evening, who has filled his office here in such a splendid way and gracious fashion. My happiness is tempered a little bit by the fact that the speeches have been so good! It is impossible for me to try and equal them, but may I say on my own behalf and on behalf of those here present, that we are delighted with these two speeches that have been made here to-night. (Cheers.) I think I am safe in saying that never have I enjoyed an evening more, or been at a dinner where the standard of the speeches was as high as it has been this evening.

I wish on behalf of myself and on behalf of Canada, to say to Lord Reading that we congratulate him on this appointment which has been given to him, and on the splendid patriotism that has forced him to take it: because, notwithstanding what he says, we all feel and believe that it is because it is a public service and because he wishes to do what he can for this country and for the British Empire that he is going to India.

Lord Reading has done a great deal for the Canadians We have had a lot of problems in which he has helped us. It is no wonder there is this great gathering to do honour to him. No one has done more to maintain friendly relations with the United States than Lord Reading, and as a Canadian

I am especially grateful to him on this account—because of all parts of the British Empire it makes most difference to us whether we have these friendly relations, on account of our three thousand miles of boundary. We have to thank Lord Reading for helping us to keep these relations as they have been kept, and as, pray God, they will remain.

Now for the toast, "The Chairman." It needs no words of mine to commend this toast to the ladies and gentlemen here present. The Chairman is well known throughout the whole English-speaking world. At an age when most of us are content to begin our political life, Mr. Churchill has made a splendid name for himself, not only as a statesman, as an administrator of departments of British Government, but as a soldier, as a war correspondent, and as an artist. (Laughter.) And now Mr. Churchill has been appointed to the important office of Secretary of State for the Colonies. (Cheers.) He has been appointed to this office at perhaps the most interesting time in the history and development of this great British Empire. In that position he will have control of the countries which have been taken under mandate by Great Britain from the League of Nations, Mesopotamia, for instance, where I believe that Mr. Churchill is intending to make a trip before long, that great country, once fertile and populous, which we hope may attain some measure of its old prosperity under British rule. Then the Crown Colonies, scattered all over the world, each one with its own resources of various kinds which are to be developed and the people there to be trained to have self-government of their own in due course.

And what of the Dominions? During the war the status of the Dominions as self-governing nations within the British Empire has been confirmed. We have signed a peace treaty along with other nations of the world. We are determined to develop our resources, to govern our country as an

autonomous part of the British Empire, but also we are resolved it shall so remain under the same King and within the British Empire itself. The Colonial Secretary is the channel of communication between the Dominions and the British Government. We look to him to help us in all our problems and troubles ; the fact of the matter is, the Colonial Secretary is to the Dominions their guide, philosopher and friend.

Next spring there will be a meeting here of the Prime Ministers of the various Dominions and the Prime Minister of this country—a consultative body ; or, as Mr. Churchill has said, " a family council." That family council is to meet in London next spring, and I feel sure that Mr. Churchill will help very much in its deliberations and in solving the many Empire problems which will come before it.

I am proud to propose this toast here this evening. On my own behalf and on your behalf also, ladies and gentlemen, may I express to Mr. Churchill our hope and belief that he will make a success of this office as he has done of others.—(Cheers.)

LORD READING.—Will you just allow me to tell you that I have resigned my office as Chairman of the English-Speaking Union for obvious reasons, and that I am informed that the Committee have elected Mr. Winston Churchill as your Chairman, which I am sure you will be very glad to hear.—(Applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN.—I am indeed deeply grateful to Sir George Perley for the kindly terms in which he has proposed to you the toast of the individual on whom has been cast the honourable duty of occupying the chair to-night. He has said a great many things about me which will be vehemently repudiated in many quarters. (Laughter.) I shall accept them in the spirit in which they were offered. I have had to

live during the last twenty years the life of a very controversial and often exposed and discredited politician, but at the same time I have always tried to march along the road—though at times I have had to dive into the fields to pick the buttercups and daisies, to admire the landscape, and to gain inspiration for that art, with the acquisition and mastery of which I have been so abundantly credited to-night, but as to which you should not commit yourselves until you see the results, which are numerous and formidable. But in spite of that I have in the main endeavoured to walk along the road which the English-Speaking Union exists to clear and to drive on through the wilderness and the jungles of the future. That great conception of the unity of the English-speaking peoples holds the field, commands dominant loyalties, and the most sincere and the most self-sacrificing elements in the human race. If we can on the morrow of this great victory, by a great understanding among ourselves, be the means of helping the whole world to get away from the bad times through which it is passing and to get protection from the horrible evils and injuries from which it has suffered, surely we shall as an English-Speaking Union discharge a duty which, as far as any human duty can be satisfied, will be complete in itself.

I am very much honoured indeed to be invited, as I have been, to undertake the task of being Chairman of this body in succession to my friend, Lord Reading. I will do my best, and I can truthfully say that there is not one aspect of the conceptions and aspirations which you hold, which is not deeply inrooted, mentally and physically, in my composition.

I thank you most sincerely for the kindness with which you have received this toast, and also for the extreme order and decorum with which you have obeyed the instructions which it was my duty to give you from time to time from the chair !

[THE PROCEEDINGS THEN TERMINATED.]

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